



Vision 2020 Diversity Task Group Minutes

Date: Monday, March 13, 2017

Time: 6:45pm Social Time, 7- 9pm Meeting

Present: Elizabeth Dyer, Brooks Harrelson, Mary Harrison, Jane Howard, David Landskov, Jennifer Litowski, Louise Mayerson, Patti Muldoon, Miriam Stein, Betty Stone, Jeff Thielman, Edith Wun

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Designation of Minute-taker and back-up for next meeting
Mary Harrison taking minutes tonight; Jennifer Litowski will take April minutes
3. Review and Acceptance of last month's minutes
Accepted as amended

4. Speaker: Jeff Thielman, Executive Director, International Institute of New England (IINE), member of the Arlington School Committee

Jeff presented a history of immigration attitudes and Acts as background for the current situation. He noted that it is important to realize how many people voted for Trump, and that 20%-30% of Americans are "very anti-immigration." In addition to the travel bans, Trump has cut the number of refugees to 50,000; since 38,000 have already been settled, that leaves 12,000 who can come in this year. He said the U.S. has a tight 2-year process for vetting refugees/immigrants. Nine security agencies look at such factors as any documents brought by the individual, e.g. drivers license; Facebook and other postings; search of records of employment, etc. in country of origin or shelter; biometric data; links to family and friends.

Jeff explained the process of bringing refugees into Massachusetts and settling them, using examples from the work of IINE. He described the effect of Trump's January ban on refugees served by IINE.

Actions we can take: 1) learn about this issue, 2) follow Congress: laws on immigration they are making (good info sources: Immigration Law Center, MIRA Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition), 3) act locally, e.g. the Trust Act in Arlington, 4) lobby everyone, even people who support the issues, 5) get involved in action and in marches – groups like his are buoyed up by marches that show support.

5. Do we want to march in the Patriot's Day Parade as part of Arlington for All?

Group voted to participate; children are welcome. Participants can join or leave the walk as necessary.

6. Reports

- March 4 Arlington Reads event with Nicole Maines
Brooks reported attendance of 320-350 at the Town Hall talk and 20-30 in each of the groups held at First Parish Unitarian Universalist in Arlington, one for youth with Nicole and one for parents with Nicole's father. This was a highly successful event, both informative and very moving. Book Rack sold most of 6 boxes of Becoming Nicole books.
- February Upstander Workshop
About 52 people attended the workshop; participants came from many different towns, including Lowell. Some youth attended. The format is evolving; excellent handout at this session. Since First Parish and Belmont are offering upstander workshops in March, we will not do another one this year. True Story's grant ends in May, which means we won't have access to no-cost performances.
- Sanctuary Town on Town Meeting Warrant
Town fact sheet on Sanctuary town status was given to attendees. Group briefly discussed responses pro and con made at Selectmen's hearing and Selectmen's unanimous vote to put the article on the Warrant.

7. New Business: None raised

Upcoming DTG meetings – all held at Jefferson Cutter House (enter through parking lot), all on Mondays: 2017:
April 3 (Note **FIRST Monday**), May 8, June 12

For more information go to our website: arlingtonmadtg.org or contact Miriam Stein, miriam.stein@comcast.net,
781-648-0255 or Mary Harrison, mar.285ha@gmail.com
DTG Chairs: Claire Carswell, Yawa Degboe

Meeting ended at 9 p.m.
Submitted by Mary Harrison